Camp Washington: Entertainment District

This particular study, concerns the commercial areas of Camp Washington. The task that was put upon our group was to identify existing commercial areas of Camp Washington, and who those businesses served, as well as distinguish or identify areas of potential development. This would then allow for the potential to enhance the image of Camp Washington as well as provide a gateway into Uptown, as well as Camp Washington itself. With our initial survey of existing businesses, there was little to be excited about except for the fact that the Shell gas station happened to be the largest grossing Shell gas station in the nation. Other commercial activity like Camp Washington Chili, Wendy’s, and a costume store serve their purpose, however there was hardly anything resembling a distinct commercial node that would have the ability to serve a plethora of consumers. This led our group to the idea that a drastic change would be needed to amp up not only the commercial capital of Camp Washington but as well as provide a new perspective on what that area could be. In order to do this we needed a substantial "brownfield" side to develop on. From there, we came up with three ideas that could each separately serve a distinct purpose. Those three ideas were an auto-oriented development, a pedestrian-oriented development, and finally the plan that I did an entertainment district.

Before discussing the goals of my entertainment district, it is first important to understand why exactly I think an entertainment district would work in such an area. First of all, Camp Washington has a substantial amount of younger residents due to low rent costs and a close proximity to the University of Cincinnati. Also, its proximity to the University of Cincinnati gives it the ability to draw a large night/weekend crowd. Lastly, there are almost no entertainment districts
in Cincinnati that are close to UC (as indicated in the Location Diagram), which leaves a huge market open. The goal of my project is to tap into that market that is longing for an alternative to college bar hopping, and provide Camp Washington with a thriving entertainment district that has the businesses to serve its residents as well as people looking for an alternative to Newport, or an expensive downtown.

There were four major anchors, or goals, to the plan including the construction of a new hotel, a new extensive and landscaped town square, invest in new businesses as well as providing incentives, and to provide access to the entertainment district through the UC Transit system, as well as the Metro System. I got the majority of my idea through my case study of Fourth Street Live in Louisville Kentucky. Being an avid fan of that particular development, I wanted to incorporate aspects of it into my Camp Washington entertainment district. Things like a variety of businesses from retail, restaurant, bowling alleys, convenient stores, etc, as well as a closed in town square that can serve as a place of gathering during the day, and an event holder at night and on the weekends. Not only would this help to fill the void in surrounding residents for a place to shop, dine, and party, but also to fill a void in the community by providing the means to acquire a supermarket or grocery store. From this I came up with four obtainable objectives that could be used to qualitatively measure success. The four objectives were to get a permit to close down the streets after a specific time at night (to ensure a pedestrian friendly environment), obtain a collage of businesses (retail, office, entertainment, restaurants), hold concerts or promotional events, and lastly to place outdoor bars and vending services (as indicated and described in the vending diagram) around the central square to encourage a gathering spot, as well as provide the services needed for the events that are being held there.

The aspects of my plan that I would assume to be most effective in achieving the kind of place I am trying to achieve are primarily the hotel, having all the building fronts being right up to the street and having parking in the back (as shown in grey is a parking garage prototype), as well as providing a transportation link through UC and the Metro, and lastly creating a strong movement structure throughout the development (as indicated and described in the movement diagram). The hotel will serve as a central focus and a landmark, providing a gateway to the
district as well as containing people once they are inside of it. Bringing the buildings up to the front of the street is aesthetically pleasing as well as pedestrian friendly. This will open up opportunities like outside dining, open bars, as well as allow retailers to put up window displays to promote their products. Providing access to Camp Washington is another must in order to drive a successful area, which will be accomplished through the Metro and UC Transit. All in all turning this district into a distinct night life, that is as vibrant throughout the day as it is throughout the night.

In completing this project, I also talked with an engineer as somewhat of a consultant as well as providing me with a second perspective. There were a few things that we discuss one of which was whether or not it would be feasible, and what the dimensions would need to be, to support a “smoke stack” monument on hopple. I ended up not making it a focal point of my project simply because of the cost, and driving hazards that would come about from such a monument as indicated by the engineer. There was also great concern in the sway of an extremely tall and skinny structure like this one, and my intent was to have it be somewhat of an observatory for people or tourists to come see. However in light of the hazards and cost, with little to perceive in projected revenue, I included it in my final model, but left it mostly out of my projects focus.

Finally in order for my design to be successful, I will need a substantial amount of businesses to commit interest, or a developer, in order to guarantee that the buildings don’t turn vacant from not selling. By looking at my plan, I will be proposing anywhere from 15-25 new spaces available, all roughly 35' tall (with the exception of the hotel which will be substantially bigger), with a majority of the smaller retail having offices or housing on the second or third floors. There are potential spots for 3-4 big box retailers, and or entertainment complexes, and four major spots for outdoor dining (show in brick or red at the four corners of the four businesses that are located three streets north of hopple). I think that my design is pretty successful in illustrating the ideas that I have talked about in this paper, however if I had a lot more time I would certainly build up potential scenarios of usage for the main town square (i.e. showing thousands of people gathered around a concert). As stated in the conclusion of my board, I strongly believe that
Camp Washington has the long term potential to turn into the next big thing in Cincinnati; however that will not come without a massive restructuring of image. The plan that I proposed is an extremely long term plan with various stages of implementation (indicated in the four goals), that could bring hundreds of jobs to the area, as well as services that are desperately needed by the residents, and activities that are desperately needed by the people that surround and live in Camp Washington.
1) What were you trying to accomplish with your plan?

The essence of the Urban Design Concept is to make the Camp Washington Neighborhood Business District an attractive and vital retail environment on both the City and County sides of Hopple Street. The Urban Design Concept recognizes as its most basic premise that revitalization of the Camp Washington Business District can only be achieved by the redevelopment of the commercial property on both sides of Hopple Street.

**Goals:**
1. Maintain and strengthen existing businesses and recruit new businesses that enhance the economic vitality of the Square.
2. Maintain an aesthetically attractive, pedestrian oriented, community business district with a desirable mix of uses and businesses.
3. Create an attractive, positive image identity for the Square.
4. Increase the availability of safe convenient customer parking.
5. Improve pedestrian and vehicular safety in Camp Washington Square.

**Objectives:**
1. Develop a clear physical image, which provides for functional cohesiveness in building facades and form, which results in a new retail environment with a strong identity, and pedestrian orientation.
3. Increase the visual attractiveness of streets and sidewalks through coordinated streetscape and landscaping improvements.
4. Retain and increase the opportunities and landscaping within the Square without adversely affecting development opportunities.
5. Establish a unique, identifiable “personality for the district.”

**What existing plans or ideas from stakeholders (e.g. recent city plans or plans as described by our city visitors) were you responding to and in what way?**

When I met with Joesph Gorman, Camp Washington Community Council leader, he gave me a tour of the Camp Washington Business District. While on my tour he kept stressing to me how Camp Washington needs businesses that bring back people and profit. The plans I have made, as illustrated in the Urban Design Concept, are made to fulfill both
his requests. They are to give Camp Washington more neighborhood niches and to bring stores that every age group can enjoy.

What precedents did you learn from or use in your plan? (Be specific with references)

**Precedents I used in my plan:**

I feel that that the following rules must be followed and implemented first when Camp Washington is revitalized:

- Diverse environment and accepting off all ages.
- Accessible for everyone.
- Make the building fronts permeable, none blank.
- Prohibit parking lots in front of buildings, allowing area to be walk-able by building to the sidewalk.
- Adequate signalization and street markings (crosswalks, etc.)
- Aesthetically pleasing
- Adequate lighting for safety purposes

Having these set standards to follow will ensure that the future Camp Washington Square will provide community members with amenities that they will be able to utilize. This also will make sure the area is safe for current residents and their families. When the crime rate of an area is down more people are more likely to visit and by having these additions to the area will grantee this change.

What aspects of your plan did the engineering students contribute to?

The engineering student we had for our group contributed by giving his input to how our designs were coming along. He also provided us with ideas he thought would be necessary to include throughout our plans for the new commercial districts that we each planned. He helped our group stay realistic and focused on things that could be accomplished to help our area be successful. He also we very helpful in providing insight to successful road designs and the processes needed to provide adequate improvements in that area.

How do you think that your design was successful in illustrating your intent?

I think my board portrays all the ideas I wanted to accomplish in my urban design concept. I think graphically my ideas are very obvious when looking at the board; they are basic, but strong in their ideas. During my presentation I think it was very easy for the audience to be able to follow my words and be able to look at the graphics to easily understand what I was presenting to them. In the planning world it is important to have ideas that are portrayed very basic because during a public hearing or planning
commission meeting it is most important for the public to understand first what is going on so they can voice their opinions. I feel I successfully did that for when community members came for our open house they were able to look at the board and understand what I was trying to accomplish with my Urban Design Plan.

How not?

What I could have done better to illustrate this project would have been to include more basic diagrams to get more ideas across. I think by labeling the current neighborhood niches would be important to community members so they could get an idea where these are in relationship to the new retail stores. This would then help them be able to give their opinion of what future retail they think should surround these current shops that are important to Camp Washington. I also think I could have done more research with different case studies to better support my ideas. When a person sees a case study where an idea was successful it gives the idea you have more credibility. Had I found at least one case study and included it on my board as reference this would have been very helpful in backing up my ideas.

Can you describe you design ideas in more detail, with quantities, e.g. building height, square feet, number of businesses, etc.?

- Promote good design principles and practice throughout Camp Washington where any development or redevelopment is proposed
- Provide an environment, which is attractive to investment and, in turn, to guide that investment to enhance the built environment
- Provide a safe, comfortable, diverse and rich "public realm" which is both legible and stimulating.

Maximum Building Height – 35 ft
Minimum Building Height – 25 ft
Square Feet – 30,000 (10,000 each floor) 3-story building
Number of Businesses – 22 – 25 different types

More in Depth:
Each Diagram has been labeled by color and number and is attached on the last page (7).

Descriptions:

1) This Urban Design statement as a diagram shows its importance. Having goals and objectives established is very important with a commercial reconstruction plan such as mine. Outlining goals gives this plan something to work on in the short term and long term planning. (It is outlined in the beginning of this paper).
2) **This is the Plan View.** Shows the building placement and the new park. This plan is one that is abstract and requires lots of reconstruction to the Camp Washington area. This entails knocking down many previous buildings that include – industrial buildings, and many vacancies and some residential. This plan will also include addition of new improved building facades and many roadway improvements.

3 Aerial Views:
1) Park View – It follows the inspiration from the other successful parks (discussed further down)
2) Northern Park View – Shows landscaping idea, and placement of parallel parking
3) South View – Shows a different angle of the park along with building placement.

3) **Park Plan** – This is a detailed view of the new envisioned park. The numbers on the map show the location of the park amenities, such as the Fountain, Picnic Area, Children’s Park, Restrooms, etc. This plan view also describes the future vegetation that will be located in the park. This ranges from Heavily Wooded Areas to Ornamental Trees. Also the landscaping indicated will be Seasonal and Perennial types. The legend also indicates what the colors and shapes mean (sidewalks, benches, etc.). One of the most important things shown on this map is the parallel parking spots and that they are a “bump out”. This is a method that helps slow traffic to make the pedestrian travel safer when crossing traffic lanes. These parking spots help make coming to Camp Washington convenient for visitors with specific needs so that they can park outside the store.

4) **Inspiration for Parks** – I chose my park to imitate these parks because they are very successful in their function. They both are very aesthetically pleasing and very eye catching. Like those parks I wanted mine to be somewhere that the public could come relax, bring children, or for different recreational purposes. The park is the focal point in my commercial district design and should be treated that way by having tremendous detailing. Having these two parks as inspiration shows what kind of class it will have and they types of people it will attract. This park is meant for all ages and diversities to come mingle and enjoy.

5) **Future Retail Diagram** – This diagram shows the placement and types of retail that will be coming to Camp Washington. These retail shops are geared to bringing back life to the area, and enjoyment for everyone. As illustrated in the last diagram, this diagram shows the park being the main focal point. Then the diagram brings your eyes to the black retail buildings located up and down the main streets on both sides of Hopple Street. At the most northern part of the “new” business district is the “Entertainment Retail” then “Neighborhood Retail”, “Regional Retail”, then back to “Neighborhood Retail”. Entertainment Retail will bring local crowds. Neighborhood Retail will provide the needs of local residents and will still draw in new visitors. Regional Retail will be
businesses that bring the new visitors and people coming for a specific need or shop. The dashed lines on this diagram indicate public access areas and where the certain retail shops will be located.

6) **NBD Attractions Diagram** - This diagram shows a different perspective of what age and types of people will come to the new and improved Camp Washington Business District. Starting from top to bottom:

**College Students/High School Students** – This age group will be coming from school in the afternoons and heading to Camp Washington for the shops, entertainment, and food during the day, and for the nightlife. This age group is at the top of the diagram because they will be Camp’s biggest entertainer.

**Families** – Families will be coming after work or during the day to take their children to enjoy the park or to the restaurants. Having Camp Washington family friendly makes more people attracted to the area.

**Business Crowd** - These are the men and women coming at the times that are considered “rush hours” and using the restaurants. They might use their lunch breaks to come sit in the park to relax or browse the shops. Being able to provide for their needs during the day may attract them for other times outside work hours.

**Travelers/Older Crowd** – This age group is those coming for the historic designations. While visiting this area with much history they will most likely want to stop in a shop or eat.

7) **Future Façade Example** – This 3D model shows what the future businesses may look like, including the level of detail. This is the example of a future coffee shop shows the chairs outside and decorative awnings. All future businesses will provide some sort of landscaping and provide an “inviting” storefront. This new Business District will be very pedestrian friendly.

8) **Future Retail Ideas** – These will all fill the needs of current residents. The new Camp Washington Square will provide shops to the area that will be considered “Neighborhood Niches” meaning they will be very unique and be “Destination Locations” bringing new visitors to the area. Some of these include: produce store, movie theatre, vintage clothing shops, a bead shop, pawn shop, etc. The community members of Camp Washington voiced these ideas in the visits I had to the area.

9) **Pictures** – Current neighborhood niches that will be staying in Camp Washington in the future. Camp Washington is a historic district and brings people from different places to see the older retail buildings. With the revitalization of the area this will help these niches attract more business.
10 **Retail Target** - This diagram illustrates with text what things Camp Washington’s Future Square needs to be successful. This will bring new retail to the area and new potential shoppers. This is just another easier way, and different perspective, of showing this process.

11) **Street Section View** – Future Heights and Widths of Camp Washington’s Business District. The Diagram says the basics and gets the point across to the viewer. Shows the height of the pedestrian in relationship to their surroundings.

**ADDITIONAL WORK:**

**Neighborhood Niche Location Map** – Shows where they are currently before the revitalization of Camp Washington takes place. Didn’t include on board because I didn’t think it was strong graphically as a diagram.
Great Streets and Gateways

Camp Washington: Commercial - Pedestrian

NBD ATTRACTIONS

1. Goals:
   a. Integrate and strengthen existing business corridors with new businesses that enhance the economic vitality of the Square.
   b. Integrate pedestrian activity into the daily life of the business district with a desirable mix of uses and businesses.
   c. Enhance the visibility and accessibility of businesses on the Square.
   d. Improve pedestrian and vehicle access.

2. Objectives:
   a. Develop a clear physical design aesthetic and identifiable streetscape in building facades and uses, which inspires a sense of place.
   b. Create a sense of place and identity.
   c. Increase the visual attractiveness of streets and sidewalks through improved streetscaping and landscaping improvements.
   d. Enhance public and private space through streetscaping and landscaping within the Square without adversely affecting development opportunities.
   e. Establish a unique identity for the district.

3. URBAN DESIGN CONCEPT

4. INSPIRATION: LOCAL

5. FUTURE RETAIL DIAGRAM

6. NBP ATTRACTIONS

7. FUTURE FACADE EXAMPLE

8. FUTURE RETAIL IDEAS

9. CAMPS WASHINGTON CHILLI

10. CAMPS WASHINGTON HARDWARE

11. CAMPS WASHINGTON ENTERTAINMENT